

be immune to positive UN pressure. Canada through nine consecutive years of membership on the UN Commission on Human Rights has been deeply involved in this process.

The UN also co-ordinates humanitarian assistance to refugees, responses to disasters, and works on social issues, such as the status of women, youth, the aged, the disabled, and the use of narcotics. progress in these latter fields relates directly to programs in Canada.

The UN has pioneered legal regimes in crucial fields, such as trade, law of the sea, outer space, the environment, civil aviation, and telecommunications.

These then are the current realities of the UN system, both its shortcomings and its positive features. What about the future? I do not see much merit in being distracted by consideration of radical institutional reform.

As I said to the UN General Assembly last September, what we must do is strengthen our existing institutions in practical ways. Canada and other states such as the Nordics are trying to convince a wide cross-section of UN members to recognize the dangers and act now.

First and foremost what is needed is an attitudinal change — the need to improve the working relationships between the superpowers. As Prime Minister Trudeau has emphasized, the five permanent members of the Security Council are also the five nuclear-weapon states. They have special responsibilities for international security under the Charter. Their contacts can be furthered through private UN meetings under the auspices of the Secretary-General. In the specific area of arms control and disarmament we must work to ensure that the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva becomes a more productive forum as it now appears to be in its work on chemical weapons.

The UN has grown rapidly in size, but the members have yet to show the maturity that must accompany the new relationships created. Developing countries should recognize and accept the responsibility that goes with their numerical superiority in the system. Developed states who provide most of the funds should recognize the legitimate objectives of the majority. Important issues should go forward on the basis of mutual respect of each other's concerns in the give-and-take of negotiation. Canada seeks to promote such a pragmatic approach.

The North-South dialogue provides a specific example. At the Versailles Summit in 1982, the major Western developed countries agreed to proceed on global negotiations, provided this would not impede the work of the existing specialized bodies of the UN system. Since then, Canada has sought to encourage the sense of realism and moderation that has been growing among developing countries. We have taken an active part in the most recent attempt to reach an agreement, but it is still too early to say whether a successful outcome can be achieved.

Last Septemeber, I proposed to the General Assembly three specific measures for improving the effectiveness of the Security Council and the Secretary-General's role to deal with peace and security issues.